

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

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O P 061715Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 1814
INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA PRIORITY
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY
AMCONSUL ISTANBUL PRIORITY

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 ANKARA 3489

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PEPR, PGOV, TU
SUBJ: CYPRUS: CONVERSATION WITH ECEVIT

REF: ANKARA 3457

1. PRIME MINISTER ECEVIT, WHO HAD RETURNED FROM BULGARIA NIGHT MAY 5, ASKED ME TO COME SEE HIM AFTERNOON MAY 6 TO FOLLOWUP CONVERSATION WITH ELEKDAG REPORTED REFTEL. I WAS ACCOMPANIED BY DCM. FONMIN OKCUN, ELEKDAG AND TULUMEN WERE WITH ECEVIT.

2. ECEVIT SAID THAT ELEKDAG HAD REPORTED FULLY OUR MAY 4 CONVERSATION (ANKARA 3457). ON THE BASIS OF THE VOTE IN HIRC, HE SHARED OUR PESSIMISM REGARDING PROSPECTS FOR LIFTING THE EMBARGO. HE BELIEVED THAT MY EVALUATION OF PROSPECTS FOR SUCCESS AND OF TURK POSITION, AS CONVEYED TO ELEKDAG WAS REALISTIC. HE WAS GRATIFIED THAT THE USG REALIZED IT WOULD BE FUTILE FOR THE GOT TO CHANGE ITS POSITION. THEREFORE, WHAT REMAINED WAS TO INCREASE THE EFFECTIVE-

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NESS OF LOBBYING EFFORTS. HE WANTED TO SAY, HOWEVER, THAT THE GOT HAD NO SUSPICIONS ABOUT THE SINCERITY OF THE US ADMINISTRATION. HE FELT THERE HAD BEEN A CONSISTENT US LINE SINCE MID-MARCH. BUT, HE ADDED, HE BELIEVED THAT THE USG HAD NOT DONE ALL IT COULD TO INFLUENCE PUBLIC OPINION. HE HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT PRESIDENT CARTER DID NOT WISH TO PUSH HIS WEIGHT BEYOND

A CERTAIN LEVEL. PERHAPS THIS WAS BECAUSE OF THE PRESIDENT'S PREOCCUPATION WITH OTHER ISSUES; PERHAPS IT WAS BECAUSE THE PRESIDENT DID NOT WISH TO BE SEEN AS ABRUPTLY CHANGING HIS PREVIOUS POSITION. WHATEVER THE REASON, HE BELIEVED THAT THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION MUST DO MORE. FAILURE AT THIS POINT WOULD NOT ONLY BE A BLOW FOR THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION, IT WOULD ALSO REINFORCE LINKAGE OF CYPRUS AND THE EMBARGO IN THE GREEK MIND.

3. THERE WAS A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY NOW TO ACHIEVE CYPRUS SETTLEMENT. IF IT WERE LOST, THE TURKS WOULD HAVE TO RE-EXAMINE THEIR POSITION. THEY WERE VERY DISAPPOINTED IN WALDHEIM. OF COURSE, NO ONE HAD EXPECTED THE GREEK CYPRIOTS TO APPLAUD TURKISH-CYPRUS PROPOSALS, BUT WALDHEIM HAD BEEN TOO EASILY DISCOURAGED. THE USG MUST USE ITS INFLUENCE, AS THE TURKS WERE USING THIERS, TO INFLUENCE WALDHEIM. THIS MUST BE DONE BOTH DIRECTLY AND INDIRECTLY. UNFORTUNATELY, THE KEY TO THE SITUATION WAS TO SOME EXTENT IN WALDHEIM'S HAND.

4. ECEVIT THEN SAID THAT I HAD TOLD ELEKDAG THAT KYPRIANOU'S PROPAGANDA WAS BEING EFFECTIVE. IF HIS PROPAGANDA WAS MORE EFFECTIVE THAN THAT OF THE ADMINISTRATION, IT SHOWED THAT THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION HAD NOT YET DONE ALL IT COULD. SCHMIDT HAD SHOWN THAT THE GREEKS COULD BE INFLUENCED. HE HAD GOTTEN KARAMANLIS
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TO SAY "YES" TO ECEVIT'S SECOND PROPOSAL FOR A MEETING AFTER HE HAD REJECTED THE FIRST. FURTHERMORE, THE TURK-CYPRIOT POSITION WAS SENSIBLE-IF MORE DETAILS WERE REVEALED PUBLICLY, IT WOULD MEAN MORE RIGIDITY. THE TURKISH CYPRIOTS HAD RETAINED A FLEXIBLE POSITION. THEY HAD AVOIDED BEING SPECIFIC ABOUT VAROSHA AND HAD MENTIONED NO TERRITORIAL PERCENTAGES. THE FIGURE OF ONE PERCENT WAS SOMETHING KYPRIANOU HAD MADE UP. FRANKLY, THE TURKISH-CYPRIOTS HAD NOT BEEN THINKING ABOUT VAROSHA ORIGINALLY, BUT THE GOT HAD "ENCOURAGED" DENKTAS TO MAKE IT PART OF THE PACKAGE DEAL. IT HAD VALUE THAT COULD NOT BE EXPRESSED IN PERCENTAGE OF TERRITORY. THE GREEK-CYPRIOTS HAD REJECTED THE PROPOSED FEDERAL SYSTEM IN GENERAL TERMS. THEY HAD GIVEN NO DETAILS REGARDING THEIR OBJECTIONS. ALL OF THIS COULD BE EXPLAINED BY THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION AND BY THE TURKS MORE EFFECTIVELY.

5. IT WOULD NOT BE RIGHT, HOWEVER, FOR THE TURKS TO LOBBY DIRECTLY. (HE IMPLIED TURK PUBLIC OPINION WAS A PROBLEM.) THE GREEKS WOULD ONLY REDOUBLE THEIR EFFORTS. THEREFORE, THE TURKS WERE TALKING INDIRECTLY ABOUT THE EMBARGO. THEY WERE SAYING THAT IF IT WERE NOT LIFTED,

THE GREEKS WOULD CONTINUE TO BE INTRANSIGENT. THIS WAS A REVERSAL FROM THE DEMIREL GOVT'S POSITION THAT IT WOULD NOT BUDGE AS LONG AS THERE WAS AN EMBARGO. THE GOT WISHED TO CONTINUE A MORE OR LESS DETACHED POSITION ON THE EMBARGO.

6. ECEVIT BELIEVED, HOWEVER, THERE WERE THINGS HE COULD DO. AS THE AMBASSADOR HAD MENTIONED, THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES REPRESENTED A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY. IN GERMANY ALSO HE WOULD BE TALKING TO PRESS AND TV. IN BRUSSELS ON MAY 24 HE WOULD BE SPEAKING AT A DINNER GIVEN BY THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS ASSOCIATION. THIS WOULD GIVE HIM AN OPPORTUNITY TO CLARIFY FURTHER THE TURKISH POSITION. HE HOPED THAT THE USG COULD ARRANGE
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FOR AMERICAN MEDIA TO GIVE THESE APPEARANCES MORE ATTENTION THAT THEY MIGHT OTHERWISE. HE DOUBTED THAT HIS EFFORTS WOULD HELP WITHOUT MORE SUPPORTING EFFORT FROM THE ADMINISTRATION. ONCE HE WAS IN THE US IT WOULD BE MORE DIFFICULT TO GET MEDIA ATTENTION BECAUSE THE GREEKS THERE WOULD TRY TO DEFLECT IT. IF IT HAD NOT BEEN FOR THE ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT ON HIM IN 1976, HE WOULD HAVE RECEIVED NO ATTENTION THEN FROM THE AMERICAN PRESS. AT ONE POINT, HE HAD BEEN IN A CAR GOING TO A TV INTERVIEW WHEN THE INTERVIEW WAS CANCELLED BECAUSE OF GREEK PRESSURE.

7. TURNING TO THE QUESTION OF AN APPEARANCE BEFORE THE SFRC, ECEVIT SAID THAT IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR HIM TO RETURN TO WASHINGTON AFTER GOING TO NEW YORK. IT WOULD BE TOO OBVIOUS; IT WOULD BE OVERDONE. PERHAPS THERE COULD BE ANOTHER CONVINCING EXCUSE TO RETURN TO WASHINGTON. HE WAS AFRAID AS THINGS STOOD HE WOULD HAVE TO MAKE DO WITH HIS NEW YORK AND WASHINGTON SCHEDULE AS NOW PLANNED.

8. ECEVIT SAID HE ALSO WISHED TO MENTION THE BINGHAM AMENDMENT. HE CHARACTERIZED IT AS MOST UNFORTUNATE. IT SHOWED THE GREEKS THAT THE MORE INTRANSIGENT THEY WERE, THE MORE THEY WOULD GET. HE FINISHED BY SAYING HE HAD CONCENTRATED IN HIS PRESENTATION MAINLY ON PUBLICITY AND LOBBYING EFFORTS. HE HAD NOT YET HAD TIME TO DISCUSS

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EXDIS

WITH HIS FREINDS (MOTIONING TO TURKS SEATED WITH HIM
AT THE TABLE) WHAT MORE CONCRETE STEPS COULD BE TAKEN.
HE WISHED TO ADD, HOWEVER, THAT UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES,
HE WOULD UNDERSTAND IF THE US ADMINISTRATION WOULD WISH
TO POSTPONE STEPS IN THE CONGRESS WITHIN REASONABLE LIMITS.

9. AMBASSADOR REPLIED THAT WHAT PRIME MINISTER HAS SAID WOULD
BE REGARDED AS HELPFUL. HE PERSONALLY HOPED SITUATION WOULD
NOT BE VIEWED AS "HOPELESS" BY EITHER SIDE. THIS COULD BE
SELF-FULFILLING PROPHECY. WITH EFFORT, POSITION COULD BE
RETRIEVED ALTHOUGH AT THIS MOMENT CHANCES LOOKED LESS THAN
50-50 AND IT WAS CLEARLY AN UPHILL BATTLE. OUR FRIENDS IN
CONGRESS HAVE TOLD US THEY NEED MORE AMMUNITION (AMBASSADOR
READ TEXT OF STATE 114636). WHILE GOT HAS TOLD US OF ITS FULL
FLEXIBILITY ON ALL ISSUES TO BE NEGOTIATED, AND HAS SO STATED
PUBLICLY, SOMEHOW THIS MESSAGE WAS NOT GETTING ACROSS. IT NEEDED TO
BE REPEATED CONSTANTLY AND EFFECTIVELY THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS,
THROUGH PRESS AND PUBLIC STATEMENTS. CASE PRESENTED BY ADMINI-
STRATION HAS SO FAR NOT HAD ITS DESIRED EFFECT.

10. AMBASSADOR SAID AS FAR AS HE KNEW WE HAD NOT TALKED TO
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KYPRIANOU, BUT WE HAD TALKED TO WALDHEIM AND TO GREEKS. WE HAD
MADE CLEAR WE FELT GREEK SIDE WAS MAKING A MISTAKE IN REFUSING
NEGOTIATIONS, ALTHOUGH WE ALSO FELT THAT A MORE EFFECTIVE REGI-
STERING OF TURKISH FLEXIBILITY IN PUBLIC CIRCUITS WOULD PUT
PRESSURE ON OTHER SIDE. WE HAD MADE CLEAR TO GREEKS THAT THEY
SHOULD CONSIDER LONG-TERM ADVERSE EFFECTS ON THEIR OWN INTERESTS

OF CONTINUING EMBARGO. THIS COULD BE A PYRRHIC VICTORY FOR GREEKS. IF PRESENT OPPORTUNITY NOT SEIZED IT COULD BE MANY YEARS BEFORE A NEW ONE RECURRED. WE HAD ASSURED GREEKS WE WILL CONTINUE TO TRY TO REMOVE EMBARGO EVEN IF PRESENT EFFORT WERE TO FAIL. EMBARGO IS AN UNNATURAL CONDITION AND SOMETHING GREEKS SHOULD NOT CONSIDER AS A FUNDAMENTAL COMPONENT OF THEIR FOREIGN POLICY OR A PERMANENT FEATURE OF US-GOT RELATIONS.

11. AMBASSADOR REITERATED THAT ADMINISTRATION WOULD CONTINUE TO MAKE MAXIMUM EFFORT ON EMBARGO ISSUE. IT DID NOT WANT A DEFEAT ON THIS ANY MORE THAN ON OTHER FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES IT CONFRONTED IN CONGRESS. ADMINISTRATION EFFORTS WILL PROBABLY BECOME MORE OVERT AND VISIBLE IN PERIOD AHEAD LEADING UP TO FLOOR VOTE. A PARTICULAR PRESENTATIONAL DIFFICULTY WAS IMPLICIT IN THIS ISSUE BECAUSE WE WERE NOT AND DID NOT WANT TO APPEAR TO BE ANTI-GREEK, AND CASE FOR EMBARGO REPEAL HAD TO BE MADE IN WAY THAT AVOIDED CARRYING ANY SUCH IMPLICATION.

12. THERE WAS ONE POINT ON WHICH AMBASSADOR SAID HE DISAGREED WITH P.M. HE DID NOT FEEL THAT RETURNING TO WASHINGTON JUNE 5 TO MEET WITH SENATORS SHOULD BE READ AS A "LOBBYING" INITIATIVE. HE WOULD BE RESPONDING TO A SENATE INVITATION. P.M. IMPLIED THAT TURKISH PUBLIC OPINION WOULD NOT SEE IT THIS WAY. HE SUGGESTED THIS WOULD NOT BE THE CASE IF THERE WERE ANOTHER REASON FOR HIS RETURN: PERHAPS MEETING WITH PRESIDENT CARTER COULD TAKE PLACE JUNE 5 OR 6 INSTEAD OF PREVIOUS WEEK.

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AMBASSADOR SAID HE WOULD EXPLORE THIS POSSIBILITY.

13. IT WAS NOTED AT THIS POINT THAT TURKISH RADIO HAD JUST CARRIED REPORT OF UK FONSEC OWENS' CALL FOR RESUMPTION OF NEGOTIATIONS. ECEVIT URGED THAT US ADMINISTRATION MAKE SIMILAR PUBLIC CALL WITHOUT DELAY. PERHAPS PRESIDENT COULD COMMUNICATE DIRECTLY WITH WALDHEIM TO URGE HIM TO PROCEED WITH INTERCOMMUNAL TALKS. OBVIOUSLY ATTEMPTS BY SECRETARY VANCE AND AMBASSADOR YOUNG HAD BEEN INSUFFICIENT, OR NOT MADE FORCEFULLY ENOUGH. ECEVIT ALSO SUGGESTED TO HIS COLLEAGUES THAT SCHMIDT BE APPROACHED TO MAKE A PUBLIC CALL ALONG LINES OF DAVID OWEN'S. ELEKDAG SAID THAT WALDHEIM NEEDED THIS KIND OF "MORAL SUPPORT" TO COUNTERACT PRESSURES ON OTHER SIDE FROM KYPRIANOU AND GREEKS, AND POSSIBLY HIS WISH TO AVOID ENTANGLEMENT IN A CONTROVERSIAL US DOMESTIC ISSUE. AMBASSADOR SAID HE WOULD RECOMMEND THAT ADMINISTRATION DECLARE PUBLICLY AT AN APPROPRIATE LEVEL ITS VIEW THAT INTERCOMMUNAL TALKS SHOULD BE RESUMED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. ELEKDAG SAID WE HAD ASSUMED AN OBLIGATION IN THEIR EARLIER TALKS WITH NIMETZ TO DO ALL WE COULD

TO HELP ACHIEVE RESUMPTION OF NEGOTIATIONS. SO FAR WE HAD NOT DONE SO, EXCEPT PRIVATELY. A PUBLIC EFFORT WAS REQUIRED. OKCUN CHIMED IN THAT IN LONDON SECRETARY VANCE HAD PROMISED TO DO HIS BEST TO PERSUADE WALDHEIM, BUT HAD NOT DONE SO. ECEVIT INDICATED HE DID NOT THINK WE COULD ASSUME KYPRIANOU WOULD IN FACT REFUSE TO ATTEND IF WALDHEIM HAD THIS KIND OF BACKING FROM US, UK AND PERHAPS FRG. RETURNING TO THE SUBJECT OF PUBLIC EFFORTS, ECEVIT SAID THAT EVERY WEEK TIME AND NEWSWEEK OUTLINED THE URGENT TOPICS FOR THE PRESIDENCY; HE HAD NOT SEEN CYPRUS MENTIONED. HE ALSO NOTED THAT PLANES FOR SAUDI ARABIA LOOMED LARGE IN THE UNITED STATES, BUT AN EMBARGO ON ANY ALLY DID NOT. AT THIS POINT ECEVIT READ US A DRAFT LETTER HE WAS SENDING TO WALDHEIM IN REPLY TO LATTER'S MESSAGE OF MAY 2 INFORMING GOT OF HIS SECRET

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DECISION NOT TO CALL FOR TALKS NOW. ECEVIT SAID HE WOULD GIVE US A COPY AND WE WILL SEND TEXT BY SEPTTEL.

14. COMMENT: ECEVIT WAS AT HIS USUAL BEST. IN CONTRAST TO THE RESPONSES OF OKCUN AND ELEKDAG EARLIER IN THE WEEK (REFTTEL), HE IMMEDIATELY ZEROED IN ON OUR CHIEF CONCERN: HOW COULD HE AND THE GOT HELP WITH PUBLIC AND CONGRESSIONAL OPINION. HE WAS FRIENDLY, CANDID, HELPFUL AND POSITIVE.

15. IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THE TWO MOST POSITIVE STEPS WE CAN TAKE AT THIS POINT ARE CLEAR: (1) ARRANGE FOR ECEVIT TO SEE THE PRESIDENT ON JUNE 5 OR 6. WITH THAT INVITATION HE WILL RETURN TO WASHINGTON AND WILL HAVE GROUNDS TO ACCEPT SFRC INVITATION. ECEVIT'S PERSONALITY AND OPEN STYLE ARE THE STRONGEST WEAPONS THE TURKS HAVE IN THE FIGHT TO GET THE EMBARGO LIFTED AND IT IS IN OUR INTEREST TO ARRANGE FOR THE FULLEST OPPORTUNITY TO USE THEM. (2) IT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT THAT WE FOLLOW UP WITH A PUBLIC STATEMENT ALONG THE LINES OF THE ONE WE UNDERSTAND DAVID OWEN MADE TODAY, MAKING CLEAR THAT WE BELIEVE THAT INTERCOMMUNAL TALKS SHOULD BE RESUMED WITHOUT DELAY AND THAT THIS CAN BE DONE ON THE BASIS OF PROPOSALS EACH SIDE HAS PUT FORWARD. THIS IS NECESSARY NOT ONLY TO INCREASE PRESSURE TO GET TALKS STARTED, BUT ALSO TO CONVINCE GOT THAT OUR EFFORTS ARE INDEED NOT HALFHEARTED AND THAT WE ARE LIVING UP TO OUR COMMITMENTS. SPIERS

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